

2012 STARPORT Softball League Rules

The Starport Fitness is officially part of the NASA - Johnson Space Center. The Gilruth Center is located on federal property and is considered a federal facility. All rules, regulations and policies of a federal facility apply to the Gilruth Center facility, indoor and outdoor. Unless otherwise stated in these rules and the Gilruth Code of Conduct, the league rules shall be the official rules of softball, written by Starport Fitness and Recreations Department and published by the Amateur Softball Association.

A. Field Equipment:

1. Softballs:

Must be ASA or USSSA approved (LISTED ON PAGE 13)

The Home Team will be required supply game balls for their home games.

- a. The home team will furnish a minimum of 4 good condition 12" softball for all men's games. In coed games, 1 good condition 12" and 1 good condition 11" softballs are required, as well as 2 12" or 11" to be provided by the home team. The visiting team is required to have softballs on them as well, but they are not needed at the start of the game. The home team must furnish these balls and have them approved by the umpire (unless preapproved by the Sports and Recreation Director). When a ball goes out of play, the team responsible for sending the ball out of play MUST retrieve that ball promptly (within 3 minutes). Until the ball is retrieved, the team responsible for sending the ball out of play MUST supply one of their game balls, NO EXCEPTIONS.**
 - b. The umpire will have the final decision on whether or not to use ANY softball supplied by either the home or away team.**
 - c. If the umpire deems the balls unusable or non-compliant, the team will be able to purchase balls from the Gilruth Center. Visiting teams may allow their softballs to be used, but that is up to the discretion of the visiting team captain or his/her designee.**
- 2. The official bat shall be listed on the ASA approved bat list (all bats appearing on the ASA APPROVED BAT LIST are approved for ALL divisions of ASA play). A batter using an illegal, altered, or non-approved bat shall be called out and disqualified from the game, and the bat shall be removed from the field of play. During the game the Umpire(s) decision shall be final and not subject to protest. Runners may not advance on any hit from an illegal, altered, or non-approved bat, and must return to the original base reached prior to the use of that bat.**
- 3. All umpires have the authority to confiscate any bat at any time that he/she judges to be "suspect" or has been involved in a play when an infielder/pitcher has been injured with a batted ball. The bat will be examined and returned to the player once it is declared legal or confiscated and destroyed if it is deemed to be altered / illegal. NO EXCUSES WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR BRINGING ILLEGAL EQUIPMENT ON THE FIELD. FAILURE TO SURRENDER THE BAT IN QUESTION WILL RESULT IN AUTOMATIC LIFETIME BAN FROM PLAYING AT THE GILRUTH CENTER.**

First offense:	up to 3 month suspension
Second offense:	up to 1 year suspension
Third offense:	up to Lifetime suspension
- 4. Metal cleats or spikes of any kind may not be used, including metal-tipped cleats. Players wearing such cleats (whether in the game or not) shall be removed from the playing area (dugout, field, and coaches' boxes) while wearing the illegal spikes. The offending player may reenter the game once the spikes have been removed.**

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GAME RULES

PITCHER'S RULE:

A pitcher's box (imaginary or real) extends 8 feet in front of and behind the rubber, 2 feet on each on side of the rubber and 3 feet above the pitcher's head. Any ball hit inside this box will result in an automatic out and will be declared a dead ball. All runners go back to the base at which they started. If the ball is hit softly, as ruled by the umpire, the ball is live and in play.

Team Rosters & Composition

Player Roster – Rosters are limited to 15 members. All players must be listed on the registration form submitted to the Gilruth along with the signature prior to competition. No player on the roster will be allowed to play without a signature. **Rosters will be considered FINAL in the 3rd week of the season.**

Individual Player Eligibility:

Regular Season

Pick-ups:

1. Men's teams may not pick up players that are registered with another team in the same league on the same night.
2. Coed teams may pick up male or female players from another team (1 player can only play on 2 teams in one night, max).

Official Rosters:

1. Women will be allowed to play on 2 coed teams (max) during league play only.
2. Players participating only in the Men's D and DD league are eligible to play on one coed team during the regular season.
3. Men participating in Coed play (only) will be eligible to be on 2 coed team official rosters but on different nights.
4. If at any time a team is unable to complete the season due to Govt. schedule conflicts, injuries or employee job transfer, the Gilruth Center may allow that team to add additional players. Permission to add a player under such circumstances must be requested before game day. If approved team must notify umpire and opposing team of these changes. Each request will be handled on an individual basis.
5. If a player's identity is in question, this must be brought to the umpire's attention prior to the last out of the game. This player must provide proper identification during that game. Failure to provide proper identification may result in a forfeit of that game. If either team is not happy with the umpires final ruling, that team may file an official protest with the Rec Director within 24 hours of the end of the game.

***(For Coed Only) It is the judgment of the Recreation Director and the Umpire to deny any player of higher skill level to participate in the Coed Recreational League for safety and integrity reasons.**

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Playoffs

1. In order to be eligible for the post-season playoffs, a player must participate in or be present for a minimum of three (3) games during the regular season.
2. For Competitive teams, ONLY players on that teams official roster registered with the Gilruth will be allowed to participate in Playoffs
3. **(COED ONLY)** During the playoffs pick up players may be selected from the teams no longer eligible for the playoffs or from the free agent list on the Starport website.
4. No players can be picked up from the Men's League to participate in the Coed playoffs.
5. Players whose teams have qualified in the playoffs may not be picked up for substitution.
6. Rosters may be checked during playoffs at any time for any reason.

All teams are encouraged to use the free agent list for substitute players. This list is updated on a weekly basis of eligible players. If a player is added to the roster from this list please update this info to the Gilruth Center so that player can be removed from the list.

B. Scheduling and Completion of Games:

1. **Seven innings or 50 minutes** (whichever comes first) shall constitute a complete game. All games will start at 6:00 PM. Forfeit time is game time. If a team cannot field a team at 6:00 PM, it shall have a 10-minute grace period to get the minimum number of players to start a game. A 5 minute grace period is in effect for all other games. After 6:00 PM, a team **MUST** begin play as soon as the minimum number of players (8) is present.
2. If at the end of a regulation game the score is tied, one complete inning (following the international tie-breaker rules) will be played assuming the normal pitch count and maximum runs per inning rules. If it is still tied after one extra inning, it will be considered a tie ball game and each team will be awarded a ½ game in the standings (in the case of a playoff game, extra innings will be played assuming the normal pitch count and maximum runs per inning until one team has been declared a winner)
3. If a game is called due to weather conditions or safety reasons, the losing team must have batted at least four (4) innings for the game to be official. If less than 4 innings the game will be rescheduled and resumed at the inning which it ended. If the game is tied after seven (7) innings, then extra innings shall be played with an International tie-breaker, 1 inning only, Regular count.

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MAKE UP GAMES

Make up games will be scheduled as following:

1. **(Men's)** Rescheduled at the end of the regular season schedule.
2. **(Coed) May be rescheduled as double headers during open time slots. If no time slots are available will be rescheduled at the end of the regular season.**

If you are in doubt a game has been canceled, the following steps should be followed:

1. Call the rain out hotline: **281-483-8655**
2. Check the Starport Web site: <http://www.starport.jsc.nasa.gov>
3. Show up at the field.

A game shall not be postponed or canceled due to weather conditions unless agreed upon by the Gilruth Center. Team members should be warned that just because it is raining in their part of town, it may not necessarily be raining at the ball field; or it may be dry at the field by game time. All decisions will be made no later than 4:00 pm on game day via List Server or Rainout hotline.

Coed Recreational Rules:

Batting Order:

The batting order must alternate males with females. A male batter who receives a walk (intentional or not) will be awarded second base. Runners advance if forced. The next batter (a female) will bat.

Exception: With two outs, the female batter has the option to walk or bat.

Balls and Strikes: 3-2, (1 courtesy foul.)

Each batter will start his/her at bat with a count of one ball and one strike. In other words, two pitched strikes equal an out and three pitched balls equal a walk. A batter who hits a foul ball, including foul tips, on a count of two strikes will be out after 1 courtesy foul.

NOTE: A pitcher will be allowed to announce, at any time, his/her intention to walk a batter upon which the batter will be automatically awarded a walk

Home Runs:

- **Field 1 or 3: (2) – by male or female players. Additional home runs are outs.**
- **Field 2: (2) - by female players only. Men hitting ball over fence are out.**

Max Runs/Inning: 6 run per inning (Exception last inning / Losing by more than 6 runs)

6 runs maximum scoring allowed per inning. After the 6th run crosses the plate, play will stop regardless of the # of outs (Exception 1: in the last inning / **Exception 2: if the team batting is down by more than 6 runs, the inning will end immediately if the tying run crosses the plate).**

In the half of the last inning in which the losing team is batting, the losing team may score as many runs needed to win until 3 outs are made.

(This will only be in effect once the umpire has announced that the next or current inning will be the last inning.)

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Run Rule:

20 after 3 innings, 12 after 4 innings.

All Bat/All Play.

Walks:

Male walks = 2 bases. Male walks with 2 outs, female has option to walk or bat.

Defense:

2/2 outfield, 2/2 infield, 1/1 battery. Only 1 female in front of outfield boundary line when female is batting.**

****If a team is found in violation of this rule, the batting team may select from the following options:**

a. Take the result of the play b. Have the batter take a free base c. Have the batter re-hit

Men's E Rules (Lower Division)

Balls and Strikes: 3-2, (1 courtesy foul)

Each batter will start his at bat with a count of one ball and one strike. In other words, two pitched strikes equal an out and three pitched balls equal a walk. **A batter who hits a foul ball, including foul tips, on a count of two strikes will be out after 1 courtesy foul.**

NOTE: A pitcher will be allowed to announce, at any time, his/her intention to walk a batter upon which the batter will be automatically awarded a walk.

Home Runs: 1

Run Rule:

20 after 3 innings, 12 after 4 innings*

NO Stealing Allowed

All Bat/All Play.

Men's DD Rules: (Middle Division)

Balls and Strikes: 3-2, (1 courtesy foul)

Each batter will start his at bat with a count of one ball and one strike. In other words, two pitched strikes equal an out and three pitched balls equal a walk. **A batter who hits a foul ball, including foul tips, on a count of two strikes will be out after 1 courtesy foul.**

NOTE: A pitcher will be allowed to announce, at any time, his/her intention to walk a batter upon which the batter will be automatically awarded a walk.

Home Runs: 3

Run Rule:

20 after 3 innings, 12 after 4 innings*

NO Stealing Allowed

All Bat/All Play.

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Men's D Rules: (Upper Division)

Balls and Strikes: 3-2, (no courtesy foul)

Each batter will start his at bat with a count of one ball and one strike. In other words, two pitched strikes equal an out and three pitched balls equal a walk. A batter who hits a foul ball, including foul tips, on a count of two strikes will be out.

NOTE: A pitcher will be allowed to announce, at any time, his/her intention to walk a batter upon which the batter will be automatically awarded a walk.

Home Runs: 5

Run Rule:

20 after 3 innings, 12 after 4 innings*

Stealing Allowed.

12 players play/Bat

* If both team captains and umpires agree to continue playing after the "Run Rule" has been reached, the run rule will be nullified for that game and the game will continue.

Team Composition:

Ten players constitute a Team. There is no maximum number of players for the batting order. A team must begin a game with at least eight players. When beginning a game with fewer than 10 players, a team may add players to the batting order from their roster to the field as players arrive.

All players must be sixteen (16) years of age to participate.

1. If a player is ejected from a game, he/she must be replaced with a legal substitute of the same gender. If a legal substitute is not available the team shall end in a forfeit in favor of the team not at fault.
2. If a team **starts** with eight (8), nine (9) or ten (10) players, they will **not** be charged with an out for the missing player(s).
3. **CO-ED teams must start a game with a minimum of 4 males and 4 females in the field of play.** A team may play with unequal numbers of males and females, but must take an "automatic out" if doing so if they have more males than females. *For example, if a team plays with 4 females and 5 males, an automatic out will be recorded in the #10 position in the batting order. At no time can a team have more than 1 more male than female players (cannot have 5 males and 3 females).*
4. A team beginning play with less than ten (10) players may add the ninth (9) and tenth (10) players at any time. The player need not appear in the field before batting, but must assume the ninth and or tenth position(s) in the batting order.

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Batting Order:

The batting order of each team must be on the lineup card and must be delivered before the game by the manager or captain to the official scorekeeper of the opposing team **five (5)** minutes before game time.

If an error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter may take his place and legally assume any balls and strikes. Any runs scored or bases run while the incorrect batter was at bat shall be legal.

If a error is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed his turn at bat and before a legal or illegal pitch has been made to the following batter or before the pitcher and all infielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout area, the player who should have batted is out. Any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first base as a result of obstruction, an error, a hit batsman, walk, dropped third strike or a base hit shall be nullified. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat. If the batter declared out under these circumstances is the third out, the correct batter in the next inning shall be the player who follows the legal batter in the lineup.

Balls and Strikes:

- a) Balls and strikes will be called with the assistance of a “strike mat” placed behind the plate. If the ball hits any part of the “strike” mat or home plate, it’s a strike!
- b) In terms of pitch arc, it should be a 6-**10** foot arc. For those unfamiliar with this rule, a pitch must go higher than six feet high at its highest point, but it is not to exceed **10** feet. Pitches that are deemed to be well outside the 6-**10** foot parameter are deemed illegal pitches (by the umpire) and are counted as automatic balls in the batter’s count, unless the batter swings.
- c) The catcher must allow the pitch to hit the mat or the ground before returning the ball to the pitcher. If the catcher catches the pitch before it hits the mat or in any way obstructs the umpire’s view, the pitch shall be declared a ball. If the batter inhibits the ball from striking the mat in any way, the pitch shall be declared a strike.
- d) Any pitch, declared illegal by the umpire (not in the arc limit of 6 to **10** feet), hit by the batter shall be a live ball.

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COURTESY RUNNER:

A Courtesy Runner may be used once per inning. The courtesy runner must be the player who made the last out. (A runner tagged out at a base or home plate does constitute the last out, even though the runner was not the batter.) If the game is in the first inning; the player furthest from the batter will become the courtesy runner. Coed: Same Rules apply (Courtesy runner must be of the same gender.)

A courtesy runner whose turn at bat comes while on base will be called out, removed from the base and come to bat. A second courtesy runner cannot be substituted at this time.

If a courtesy runner is substituted for illegally, the infraction must be caught before the next pitch. If the infraction is caught before the next pitch; the courtesy runner is out. A player becomes a courtesy runner when they have touched the base that is occupied by the player they are running for. Courtesy runners may not run for another courtesy runner.

Note: A courtesy runner does not replace the base runner on defense. Courtesy runners must be on the lineup card of the game being played, and teams must report a courtesy runner when he/she enters the game.

FORFEITS:

League Umpires and Recreation Manager have the authority to determine forfeits. Forfeits will result but are not limited to the following reasons: ineligible player, absence from a scheduled game, or unsportsmanlike conduct.

Grounds for forfeit:

1. A FORFEITED shall be declared by the Umpire in favor of the Team not at fault in the following cases:

(The score of a forfeited game shall be 10-0 in favor of the team not at fault.)

A. If a Team fails to appear on the Field, or refuses to begin the Game for which it has been scheduled, at the time the Game was assigned.

B. If a Team uses tactics noticeably designed to delay or hasten the playing of a Game.

C. If an ejected player does not leave the field immediately when ordered to do so.

D. If for any reason a Team does not have the designated number of Players to begin or continue the Game.

E. If, after a warning by the Umpire, any one of these Rules is willfully violated.

F. All Umpire is encouraged to employ his best discretion to avoid forfeiture of any Game, within the scope of good reasoning and The Gilruth Code of Conduct.

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Team forfeit:

A forfeit deposit is required; the amount will be enough to cover 2 games, **(2 checks, \$20 each) = \$40 total.**

When the forfeit deposit falls below this number it is the responsibility of that team to bring the deposit back up to the minimum. Questions regarding forfeit deposits should be directed to the Gilruth Information Desk. **(281-483-0304)**

1. If Starport is notified at least 24 hours in advance that your team will not be playing you will not be charged the forfeit fee. If notified less than 24 hours in advance your team will be held responsible.

2. If a game has been officially declared a forfeit, teams may scrimmage on the field but umpires and score-keepers are not obligated to work the scrimmage. Such competition will not be sanctioned as an official contest, and participants will be playing at their own risk.

3. A double forfeit shall count as a full loss for both teams in the standings.

If a team forfeits more than twice in a season, they may be disqualified from that season.

PROTEST

A PROTESTED GAME consists of a difference in opinion on the field between the protesting team, opposing team and/or the Umpire regarding the application or interpretation of either Official Printed Playing Rules, or Specially Adopted Ground Rules.

Allowable protests should be first lodged by the team captain to the Home Plate Umpire prior to the next pitch, legal or illegal. A protest of the ruling must be made verbally by the Team Captain before the next pitch, legal or illegal. Failure to follow this procedure will invalidate the protest. **If unsatisfied with the ruling, the captain must then lodge his/her protest to the Recreations Manager within 24 hours of the end of the game.** The Official, Recreations Manager or his/her designee will then rule on the protest.

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Conduct

Fighting, Arguing with Umpires WILL NOT be tolerated and will result in an ejection (for players or fans). All games will be conducted and ruled by the umpires and all persons must respect their authority. Unsportsmanlike conduct, profanity, abusive language, fighting, intentional contact or any action or behavior that impedes umpires from performing their duties will not be tolerated under any condition and will be subject to penalties described below.

a. Violation: Unsportsmanlike conduct, profanity, or abusive language, including verbal attacks or abuse directed at umpires or scorekeepers.

Penalty: Minimum of ejection from game, future game(s) suspension with a possible maximum of one year loss of eligibility, and possible forfeiture of game.

b. Violation: Offensive and/or derogatory remarks made by players, coaches and/or spectators directed at the opposing team or its fans.

Penalty: Once the umpire has issued a warning to ANY team member or its fans, the first violation after such warning will result in ejection of the offending person (if a player or coach) AND assessment of an administrative out to the offending team. The second violation by ANY MEMBER of the same team or its fans will result in **forfeiture of the game**.

c. Violation: Use of deliberate and/or unnecessary force when going into a base or any action which constitutes an attempt to inflict, or the actual infliction of, or injury to other participants and/or staff

Penalty: Immediate ejection from the game, suspension of the next two games played and/or possible maximum of one year loss of eligibility, and possible forfeiture of game.

Report ALL injuries to your Umpire immediately. In the event of an emergency please notify Starport Staff inside the Gilruth Center. If there is need of an ambulance call 281.483.3333 from a cell phone or use the Blue Phone located at field 3 or at the west end of the soccer field. If using the blue phone stay on the line while EOC connects you to EMS and be prepared to give clear details of your location so that emergency personnel can arrive as quickly as possible to provide assistance.

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Gilruth Alcohol Policy

Recognizing that moderate consumption of alcohol can add to the enjoyment of adult social events and celebrations at the Gilruth Center, we must ensure a safe and enjoyable environment for employees, family members and guests. Alcohol consumption must be responsible.

With the exception of league softball, alcohol at the Gilruth is only authorized through the sale of beer and wine by the Starport TABC licensed operator. Exceptions to this policy are extremely rare and require Center Director approval.

Exceptions have historically been made for league softball play. In order to support a family environment at the Gilruth, league softball player's behavior must meet the following expectations:

All rules established by the Gilruth Code of Conduct and Softball rules including

- No abusive language or disorderly conduct
- Alcohol in designated areas only
- Beer only
- No glass containers
- Tournaments must use Starport's TABC licensed operator

Consumption must be responsible and moderate

By law, no minors (Texas legal age 21) may be provided alcohol

Umpires have the responsibility and authority to enforce this policy at the softball fields with support from team captains, JSC Security, and Starport and Center Management. Reports will be provided regularly to the Center Director. Any reports of excessive or irresponsible use of alcohol, disorderly behavior or other violations of these mandates will result in immediate termination of this privilege. Softball player enrollment indicates agreement to accept the responsibility and abide by this policy.

Miscellaneous

NO SMOKING IN OR WITHIN 10 FEET OF THE DUGOUTS

NO PETS ALLOWED ON GILRUTH FACILITY

NO CHILDREN UNDER AGE OF 16 IN DUGOUT.

NO ALCOHOL IN DUGOUT

The consumption of beer is allowed at the softball fields, but it must be kept out of the team bench area. **BEER IN CANS ONLY** - No glass bottles, wine coolers or hard liquor are allowed at or near the playing fields. Player(s) consuming beer inside dugouts will result in a forfeit. Teams in multiple violations anytime during the season after will include expulsion from the league.

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GLASS BOTTLES AND CONTAINERS

No glass bottles/containers are allowed near the playing fields! Even if you are pouring it into a cup. Any team found in possession of glass containers **WILL FORFEIT** the game automatically. **THIS IS YOUR WARNING!** No other warnings will be issued. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** If it is prior to your game, you will forfeit your game. If it is after your game, you will forfeit your next game. It doesn't matter if it is just one person on your team and the rest have gone home.

Umpire Fees:

INCLUDED IN REGISTRATION FEE

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Approved Softballs	
<p>ASA Softballs</p> <div>   </div> <div> <p>Black Colored Marking & Stamp Max 375 lbs Max .44 cor</p> <p>Blue Colored Marking & Stamp Max 375 lbs Max .40 cor</p> </div>	<p>USSSA Softballs</p> <p>12” Classic M Ball:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> shall have an optic yellow cover shall have “USSSA CLASSIC M” in 1/8” letters and the USSSA logo with a 1-1/8” diameter; shall have lettering and logo in blue color and such lettering and logo shall be applied to be indelible; shall have a COR of 40 or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement and shall have a compression of 325 pounds or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement. <p>11” Classic W Ball:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> shall have an optic yellow cover shall have “USSSA CLASSIC W” in 1/8” letters and the USSSA logo with a 7/8” diameter shall have lettering and logo in blue color and such lettering and logo shall be applied to be indelible shall have a COR of 44 or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement and shall have a compression of 400 pounds or less under the ASTM test used under the USSSA Softball Ball License Agreement.
Softballs NOT Approved for Use in Starport League	
<p>ASA Softballs</p> <div>   </div> <div> <p>Red Colored Marking & Stamp</p> <p>Red Colored Marking & Stamp</p> </div>	<p>USSSA Softballs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12” Stadium M Ball - 12” Classic Plus Ball